

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC COMMENT FOR A
WATER QUALITY STUDY (TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD
DEVELOPMENT)**

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) seek written and oral comments from interested persons on a water quality study that is beginning in the Blackwater River watershed. The purpose of the study will be to identify sources of bacteria in the watershed and to determine the reductions in bacteria loadings needed to allow various streams in the watershed to meet water quality goals. The study will result in Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) to address multiple bacteria impairments on tributaries to the Blackwater River.

The affected streams were identified in Virginia's 1998 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report, the Virginia 2002 303(d) Report on Impaired Waters, and the 2004 VA Water Quality Assessment 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Report as impaired due to violations of Virginia's water quality standards for fecal coliform bacteria. The streams are therefore not supporting the Primary Contact Recreation (Swimmable) Designated Use. The impairments include: 16.78 miles of Mill Swamp located in Isle of Wight and Surry Counties, 8.16 miles of Rattlesnake (Creek) Swamp located in Isle of Wight, and 17.1 miles of Cypress Swamp located in Surry County.

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and §62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia require DEQ to develop TMDLs for each pollutant causing a water quality problem, or impairment, in streams contained in Virginia's 303(d) Report on Impaired Waters.

The first public meeting for the Blackwater River Tributaries TMDLs has been scheduled for Monday, October 25th at 7:00pm at the Surry Community Center, 205 Enos Farm Drive in Surry, VA. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the TMDL development process in the Blackwater Tributaries and to share information on bacteria sources in these watersheds. Anyone interested in attending this meeting should contact the regional TMDL coordinator, Chris French (contact information provided below). Information from this meeting will be made available on the DEQ TMDL web site at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/tmdl/>.

A fact sheet on the water quality study and development of TMDLs is available upon request or can be viewed at the DEQ TMDL website at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/tmdl/>. The public comment period will end on **November 24, 2004**. Written comments regarding the water quality study and TMDL development should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the comments and should be sent to Chris French, Department of Environmental Quality, 4949-A Cox Road, Glen Allen, Virginia, 23060, telephone (804) 527-5124, fax (804) 527-5106, or e-mail rcfrench@deq.virginia.gov.